

Basic Detail Report

Sole Power

Date

2018

Primary Maker

Beau McCall

Materials

Upcycled Adidas sneakers, raffia, and buttons

Description

From the artist: "With Sole Power, I upcycled Run-DMC-inspired Adidas. The 1980s hip-hop group helped increase the popularity of the shell-toe sneakers and famously wore them with no laces. The Adidas version I used includes a built-in sock (to create the no laces effect) and I embellished the tongue to form a narrative. The material of the sneaker's tongue is neoprene. Sewing through this material was akin to sewing through rubber. It was very challenging and required me to use an upholstery needle (which I rarely use). Such a small amount of space to embellish would normally take about a week. But due to the difficulty of the material it took a month to complete. I began by creating a macrame technique using the raffia and then sewing it onto the neoprene. On top of the raffia base I sewed decorative buttons. The inspiration behind Sole Power was the film "Black Panther" and its fictional city of Wakanda. Drawing from that theme I used African button masks, raffia (a popular material in West and Central Africa), and Maasai tribe-inspired decorative buttons to bridge the fictional with the historical for a unique celebration of African culture. The title is a play on popular slogans in Black culture such as "soul power" and "Black power." Here, "power" is preceded by the word "sole" referencing how style--footwear, in particular--can be a source of empowerment through its activation of self-expression."

Dimensions

Each shoe: 4 1/2 x 4 x 12 in. (11.4 x 10.2 x 30.5 cm); men's size 11